

Adopted 5/25/05

MONTGOMERY COUNTY COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

**401 North Washington Street, Suite 100
Rockville, Maryland 20850**

MEETING MINUTES

April 27, 2005

7:00 p.m.

ATTENDING

Patricia E. Cornish
Holly Fechner
Jodi Finkelstein
Jodi Grant
Carol Lynn Green
Deborah Horan
Resa Levy
Regina Oldak
Tedi S. Osias
Shelia Parker
Gary P. Smith
Yun Jung Yang

STAFF

Paula Rodgers
Judith Vaughan-Prather

GUESTS

Claudia Lujan, Former CFW Intern
Barbara Heyman, Maryland CFW

ABSENT

Shirley L. Johnson

I. CALL TO ORDER/APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES.....Cornish

President Cornish called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. The following additions to the meeting agenda were noted: discussion of the Annual Planning Meeting under the Executive Committee Report and a discussion of the election of CFW President under New Business. Two additional items under the Staff Report included National Health Check-up Day and a CFW staffing issue.

Upon the motion of Commissioner Smith, duly seconded by Commissioner Osias and unanimously passed, the Minutes of March 23, 2005 were approved as written.

II. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

A. Commissioner Recruitment

The deadline for applying to serve on CFW closed April 15; applications were received from 16 well qualified candidates, and interviews are now taking place. The interview panel consisting of Commissioners Oldak, Yang and Horan, along with Executive Director Vaughan-Prather interviewed 5 candidates on April 26 and will interview 8 more on April 28. Commissioners Parker and Grant had volunteered to serve on the panel but were unable to do so due to scheduling conflicts. A third interview date will need to be scheduled in order to accommodate one candidate who is out of town this week and another candidate who missed her appointment on April 26.

B. President's Advisory Council Meeting

The second of this year's three meetings of the leaders of Montgomery County's women's organization will take place on Wednesday, May 4 at New Fortune Restaurant in Gaithersburg. Senator Sharon Grosfeld and Delegate Jean Cryor will serve as guest speakers to present a wrap up of legislation in the 2005 Maryland General Assembly. Registration and networking will begin at 6 p.m. and the program and dinner will start at 6:30 p.m. All commissioners are invited to attend and to call or email Paula Rodgers to let her know of their plans to attend.

C. Committee Evaluation Review Board (CERB)

On March 14, the County Council held a worksession at which the Council staff recommended against the proposed CERB proposal for a 5-year sunset provision for every board, committee and commission (B/C/C) in county government. CFW testified at a March 8 hearing before the County Council objecting to the sunset proposal. Although Council staff recommended against this proposal, council staff has indicated that there is still some support on the council for it and there are still concerns expressed by members of the county's B/C/C's. President Cornish and Commissioner Oldak will attend the next Council worksession on this issue, scheduled for May 5 at 2:00 p.m. Commissioner Osias will try to attend as well.

D. Health Empowerment Forum

President Cornish attended the Business and Professional Women's 6th Annual Health Empowerment Forum for Women on April 20. Ms. Cornish said that the event, which was co-sponsored by CFW, was very well attended and included excellent speakers from NIH. The forum focused on the problems of obesity.

E. Sodexho Women's History Event

On March 31, President Cornish and CFW Counselor Fran Berger presented a workshop to Sodexho Marriott Employees on Women's History. The Sodexho employee group, "WINGS" (Women's Networking Group) periodically sponsors seminars and workshops of interest to female employees.

F. Equal Pay Day/Equal Pay Commission

On April 19, President Cornish and Commissioner Fechner attended a Senate news conference on the Paycheck Fairness and Fair Pay Acts. Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton, Senators Hillary Clinton and Tom Harkin, and Congresswomen Rosa DeLauro joined together in introducing the Paycheck Fairness Act and Fair Pay Act. Later that evening, President Cornish was the guest speaker at a BPW dinner event, "Equal Pay Day—Are We There Yet?"

CFW has forwarded to Delegate Cryor a recommendation that Wendy Kahn, Tracy Brown, and Commissioner Holly Fechner be appointed to serve on the State Equal Pay Commission. President Cornish said it was her understanding that these nominations were forwarded onto the Governor's office. Ms. Cornish will follow-up on the matter.

Commissioner Grant reported that CFW's editorial on Equal Pay was published in the Montgomery Gazette, April 22, 2005 edition. *(Staff's Note: The article, "Women Have Come a Long Way, But Pay Hasn't" is in the 4/22 issue of the Gazette and copies will be made available to commissioners).*

G. Annual Planning Meeting

The enabling legislation for CFW states that the commission meets monthly; however, historically, meetings have not taken place during the months of July and December. The question was raised whether the CFW should meet in July or August, or both months and which month would be best for the planning meeting. Commissioners were asked who will be available on the fourth or fifth Wednesday in August if the 2005 Annual Planning Meeting were held then. Further discussion ensued about whether it was more practical, for planning purposes and to get the new commissioners involved in the planning process, for the CFW planning meeting to take place earlier than August.

Commissioner Cornish is not available on July 27. Commissioner Osias noted her unavailability to meet on August 24. Commissioner Parker noted her unavailability to meet on August 31 and expressed concern about the dates of the regularly scheduled meetings being changed when it was made clear that the commission regularly meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month. Commissioner Yang agreed with the concern expressed by Ms. Parker, but others noted that it is important to have as many commissioners as possible attend the planning meeting, and it might then justify changing the date to accommodate schedules.

Following a lengthy discussion of the issue, it was moved and seconded that the Annual Planning Meeting be held in August. The motion passed. Commissioner Oldak moved that the Annual Planning Meeting be held on August 31; Commissioner Levy seconded the motion. The motion failed due to the number of those commissioners present who abstained from voting. (Aye-5; Nay-2; Abstained-4)

Commissioner Osias then moved to adopt a suggestion made earlier by Executive Director Vaughan-Prather, that the commissioners wait until it was known who the five new commissioners will be and then inquiring whether they are able to meet on August 24th or August 31st. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Fechner and passed by a 7 to 0 vote, with 4 commissioners abstaining.

III. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Website Updates

Commissioners with updated biographical information should submit this information to Executive Director Vaughan-Prather. Paula Rodgers has posted each committee's work plan on the CFW website.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Election of CFW President

Elections of the CFW President for FY 06 will take place at the June 22nd CFW meeting. Intent to Run forms were distributed to commissioners at tonight's meeting. Any commissioner interested in running for the office of CFW President, should return this form by the May 25th CFW meeting.

V. STAFF REPORT..... Vaughan-Prather

A. Budget

The CFW FY 06 Budget was presented at a worksession before the County's Health and Human Services Committee on April 28. President Cornish and Commissioners Horan, Oldak and Parker accompanied staff to the worksession. CFW was initially asked about cutting \$13,000 from its FY 06 budget. Instead, staff was asked to report back to the HHS Committee, a proposal on how to raise CFW Counseling Center fees to produce \$13-15,000 in revenue, rather than cut the budget proposal.

The follow-up HHS worksession is scheduled for May 5 at 2:00 p.m. at the Council Office Building. President Cornish and Commissioners Oldak, Parker and Osias will try to attend.

B. Women's Health Check-up Day

MC CFW is helping to publicize an event sponsored by the Montgomery County Department of Health & Human Services. HHS is presenting Women's Health Check-Up Day on May 9, 4-8 p.m. at the Mid-County Services Center in Wheaton, Maryland. There will be free health screenings for women and health education and demonstrations and the event is open to the public.

C. Staffing Issue

Claudia Lujan, a graduate student intern in the University of Maryland's School of Social Work, began her internship with the CFW Executive Director's office in September 2004. Over the last 7 months, Ms. Lujan has been a very valuable and integral part of the Commission, providing staff support to all of CFW's committees and support to the Commission's programs such as the Women's Legislative Briefing, the IWin Committee's IWork Project, and the 2005 Summer Computer Camp Scholarship Program. In addition, Ms. Lujan has also been a true joy to work with.

Ms. Lujan's internship ended on April 21 and she will graduate from the University of Maryland in May. On behalf of all of the commissioners and the staff of CFW, the commissioners and staff presented Claudia with a token of everyone's appreciation—an "Elegant Power" sterling bracelet designed by a female Peruvian artist.

Ms. Lujan expressed her appreciation to the members and staff of the Commission and said that her internship was a great learning experience for the work towards her Master's Degree from the University of Maryland. Ms. Lujan said that after graduation, she will begin employment with a local organization in Washington, D.C. that serves adult immigrants, and that she looked forward to future opportunities to work with CFW on matters of mutual interest.

VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Policy and Legislation (PAL)Oldak/Osias/Finkelstein

1. State Legislation – Commissioner Finkelstein reported on the state legislative issues that the PAL committee worked on over the past year. She said that next year's top priorities for the Maryland General Assembly will be budget; health and human services, and also issues that are related to the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR); not just state legislation.

2. M-LAW – Commissioner Oldak is on the bylaws and policy committee which met this morning and is setting up by laws and policy for the M-LAW. A general meeting will be held on May 11, from 3-5 p.m. and Ms. Oldak will attend. Jessica Morgan of the Maryland Women's Law Center will serve as nominating committee chair. Persons interested in being considered as a candidate must submit their names by June 13. The CFW will discuss whether to submit into nomination a representative of the CFW at the May 25th CFW meeting.

3. Federal Legislation – Commissioner Grant reported that Senator Edward Kennedy introduced the Healthy Families Act this week; Senator Barbara Mikulski is an original co-sponsor. Commissioner Fechner added that a press conference was held today at which the Institute for Women’s Policy Research reported on its finding that the savings of the Act far outweigh the cost.

4. FMLA Letter - the FMLA letter developed by the National Partnership for Women and Families is generating a lot of press interest. On May 10, the House is holding a full day seminar on women and social security.

5. Collection of Data on Women – The Department of Labor’s Bureau of Labor Statistics’ decision to stop the collection of data on women has generated an outpouring of opposition. However, DOL is proceeding with its decision. National women’s groups all over the country are staying on top of the issue. They have been sending out notices to various list serves and people are expressing their opposition to the decision.

B. Immigrant Women in Montgomery County (IWin)Yang/Levy/Horan

1. Fundraising Event – The IWin Committee is hosting a fund-raising event on May 22 from 2-4 p.m. at Commissioner Horan’s residence. The event, *Chocolate, Checks and Champagne* is being held to raise funds for IWin’s “Know Your Rights” campaign. The contributions that are collected will provide for the Sexual Harassment in the Workplace and Employment Rights of Pregnant Women brochures to be printed in the Spanish language.

Congratulations and appreciation were extended to Commissioner Yang who obtained a donation in the amount of \$4,000 from Global Employment Network, to print both of the brochures in the Korean language.

Commissioners are asked to contribute chocolate confections to serve at the event so that precious funds would not be spent on refreshments. Commissioner Osias offered to donate a decadent chocolate cake. Commissioner Oldak offered to donate rum balls and chocolate dipped pretzels. Please send Ms. Vaughan-Prather an email to let her know what type of chocolate confection each commissioner will donate. Entertainment at the event will be provided by the Walt Whitman High School Beauty Shop Quartette.

C. Technology and Girls (TAG)Smith

1. Summer Computer Camps – Commissioner Smith reported that an article, drafted by Ms. Lujan, announcing scholarship availability for the 2005 summer computer camp program was published in the April 25, 2005 MCPS Bulletin.

2. The next TAG committee meeting is May 18 at 5:30 p.m.

Commissioner Smith said that over the last several years, very little information has been reported on statistics about the number of girls who enter into computer technology positions. However, a study has just been published by Computing Research Association that found the following based on research from the Higher Education Research Institute at the University of Los Angeles:

- The percentage of incoming undergraduates indicating they would major in computer science declined by more than 60 % between fall of 2000 and fall of 2004 decreased by 60% .
- Interest in computer science among women fell 80% between 1998 and 2004 and 93% since its peak in 1982.

The TAG Committee will discuss these findings at its next meeting and Commissioner Smith will write an article on this report for the CFW newsletter.

3. Computer Camp Survey – The TAG Committee conducted a survey of campers who attended the camp since the program began six years ago. Claudia Lujan designed the survey, mailed it out to the 245 girls for whom we had contact information (over 300 girls attempted camp during those years), and she made follow-up calls to the girls who had not responded. Sixty-four (26%) responded to the survey, which was an excellent response rate considering there was only a 2 week response time. Eighty-eight percent of respondents were scholarship recipients.

Some of the survey findings regarding impact on self, education and future/career of the girls follow:

- 87% felt that the camps changed the way they think and feel about information technology.
- 81% are more confident using the computer
- 84% use the internet for homework
- 45% report that they are doing better in school
- 47% are more likely to study computers or IT
- 63% know more about careers in IT
- 84% reported that, as a result of attending the camp, they are more likely to attend college.

The last question of the survey was open-ended, permitting the girls to give CFW their comments and they gave great testament to the very positive impact that the camp had on them.

Commission members agreed that the results of the survey needed to be presented to the County Council's Health and Human Services Committee, the County Executive, MCPS and Montgomery College. The results also should be shared with Discovery Communications, which has been a major benefactor of the scholarship program.

Commissioner Oldak moved acceptance of the report; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Horan and unanimously passed. Appreciation was expressed to the TAG Committee and to Ms. Lujan.

VII. LIAISON REPORTS

A. Women's Fair

Commissioner Levy reported that the Women's Fair held on April 16 was a big success and a very worthwhile event. The event was well attended all day and there were many interesting workshops presented and exhibits to visit. President Cornish thanked Ms. Levy for her work in representing the CFW on the Women's Fair Planning Committee. Ms. Levy will have additional information to report once the committee held its debriefing meeting.

B. Divorce Roundtable

Commissioner Osias reported that members of the Divorce Roundtable were delighted to be working with the Commission for Women/Counseling and Career Center on plans for the Prenuptial Project which will pilot in October 2005. Ms. Osias explained that the basis for the program was developed from the work that the Roundtable's attorneys, mediators and social workers have done with families facing devastating divorces. Ms. Osias said that the program was designed not with any religious focus, but to help people learn communication and conflict management skills.

On May 12, from 5:30-7:30 p.m., there will be a program sponsored by Robert E. Emery, author of "The Truth About Children and Divorce" and the Montgomery County Bar Association, at the Bar Association's headquarters located at 27 West Jefferson Street in Rockville.

C. Fair Housing – Ms. Vaughan-Prather distributed copies of a flier announcing an educational forum on predatory lending sponsored by the Montgomery County Office of Human Rights. "Predatory Lending - Protecting Your Home and Your Credit" will be held on Wednesday, May 18, 2005 from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. Commissioner Johnson has asked that the CFW help in publicizing this event by distributing fliers at the Counseling and Career Center, and at the Presidents' Advisory Council Meeting and through the CFW's email distribution lists.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission for Women, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

**Minutes Submitted By
Paula S. Rodgers
Montgomery County Commission for Women**

CFW Action and Follow-up Items

- [] 1. Commissioners planning to attend the May 4 President's Advisory Council meeting should call or email Paula Rodgers to RSVP.
- [] 2. President Cornish and Commissioner Oldak will attend the next Council worksession on the proposed CERB legislation to sunset certain boards/commissions and committees. The worksession is scheduled for May 5 at 2:00 p.m. Commissioner Osias will try to attend as well.
- [] 3. President Cornish will monitor the nominations of Wendy Kahn, Tracy Brown and Commissioner Holly Fechner for appointment by the Governor's office to the State Equal Pay Commission were forwarded onto the Governor's office.
- [] 4. Executive Director Vaughan-Prather will poll the new commissioners once we know who they are, on their availability to meet either August 24 or 31 for the CFW Annual Planning Meeting.
- [] 5. Commissioners may keep their biographical information on the web up to date by submitting changes to Executive Director Vaughan-Prather.
- [] 6. Intent to Run for CFW President forms were distributed to commissioners at the meeting. Any commissioner interested in running for the office of CFW President, should return this form by the May 22nd CFW meeting. Elections will take place at the June 22nd CFW meeting.
- [] 7. The follow-up HHS worksession is scheduled for May 5 at 2:00 p.m. at the Council Office Building. Any Commissioners who are able to attend should do so.
- [] 8. Persons interested in being considered as a candidate for the M-LAW Board must submit their name by June 13. The CFW will discuss whether to submit into nomination a representative of the CFW at the May 25 CFW meeting.
- [] 9. Regarding the May 22 Chocolate, Checks and Champagne fundraising event; commissioners are asked to send Judy an email to let her know what type of chocolate confection they will donate.
- [] 10. Commissioner Smith will write an article on the Computing Research Association's report about the declining interest among Americans in computer science.
- [] 11. The results of the 2005 Computer Camp Survey need to be presented to the County Council's Health and Human Services Committee, the County Executive, MCPS, and Montgomery College. The results also should be shared with Discovery Communications, which has been a major benefactor of the scholarship program.